

SUPPORT TO VICTIMS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

What is Sexual Violence? Sexual violence includes a range of different types of aggressions and actions such as, but not limited to, humiliation like lewd looks or words, sexual practices without consent, sexual harassment, and rape.

After an aggression, victims require support as they have experienced a trauma that includes physical and psychological consequences. In tourist destinations, some victims of sexual violence also have to deal with language barriers, different cultures, and unfamiliar laws that they are not used to in their home country.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE IS NEVER THE VICTIM'S FAULT AND IT CAN HAPPEN ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD

Evidence is important. To avoid losing medical or physical evidence, victims should try:

- To not shower or wash themselves, change clothes, or wash their clothes;
- To file a police report with local authorities within the first **72** hours after the incident.

Victims of sexual violence in Mexico can reach help by:

- Calling 911 to contact the local police or request an ambulance;
- Seeking medical attention from a hospital or a health center;
- Filing a report of the assault to authorities (*Ministerio Público*), if they want to.



HAVE YOU BEEN ASKED FOR HELP IN A SITUATION OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE?

Believe the victim, as you could be the first person they encounter following the assault.

YOU CAN SUPPORT victims by:

- Offering to get them to a safe space
- Asking them if they need help
- Listening actively and not judging them (stay patient, polite, and empathetic)
- Providing them with sources of information and referring them to available local resources
- Helping them seek medical attention
- Helping them to reach a family member, a friend, or another trusted person
- Helping them if they want to report the crime to the police or a third party (if they are foreigners in Mexico, offer to contact their Embassy or Consulate in Mexico to seek further assistance)

Be supportive of the choices a victim makes during the process. It is extremely important for a survivor of sexual assault to make the decisions about what they want to do. This can help them regain a sense of control.

#ISUPPORTVICTIMS

Canadian citizens living or travelling in Mexico who are in need of consular assistance can contact the Embassy of Canada in Mexico at mxicocs@international.gc.ca or by calling **+52 55 5724 7900** ext **379-3348**, or the Emergency Watch and Response Center at sos@international.gc.ca or by calling **001 613 996 8885**. We have also made available a guide *Are you a victim of sexual violence?* To access this guide, scan the following QR code:

